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ECONOMICS, MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS 2023

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES, INSIGHTS AND NEW CHALLENGES

Róbert Štefko - Richard Fedorko - Eva Benková (Eds.)



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Strategic City Management in the Digital Era: Fostering Sports and Sports Tourism for Comprehensive Urban Development

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Abstract

Research background: Research has consistently highlighted the negative impacts of sedentary lifestyles linked to increased screen time on health and social interactions. Concurrently, studies have emphasized the positive effects of nature exposure on well-being and the importance of integrating cultural heritage with tourism experiences. These findings serve as a foundation for Ein Qiniyya's approach to promoting sports tourism to address these challenges while embracing the village's unique cultural and natural attributes..

Purpose of the article: The purpose of this article is to explore the potential of promoting sports tourism in Ein Qiniyya to revitalize well-being and social bonds amidst the Age of Screens.

Methods: This article is grounded in a comprehensive literature review that encompasses research on sedentary lifestyles, the impact of screen-based interactions, nature's influence on well-being, cultural heritage in tourism, and sustainable practices. Through this review, a nuanced understanding of the challenges posed by the Age of Screens and the potential of sports tourism in Ein Qiniyya has been developed.

Findings & Value added: Findings suggest that by leveraging Ein Qiniyya's unspoiled nature and vibrant cultural heritage, sports tourism can counter sedentary lifestyles, foster face-to-face interactions, and offer authentic experiences that resonate with visitors. In conclusion, the development of internal and external sports tourism in Ein Qiniyya presents significant economic growth and recognition potential. However, addressing challenges such as infrastructure development, funding, stakeholder engagement, and marketing strategies is imperative for success. Overcoming these obstacles will position Ein Qiniyya as a thriving sports tourism destination, yielding economic growth and a heightened reputation. Embracing sports education and tourism can strategically transform Ein Qiniyya into a vibrant city that values active lifestyles, community cohesion, and its unique identity.

Keywords: school management, classroom management, elementary school, self-regulation, cognitive behavioral theory

JEL classification: L83, Z32, Z20

1. Introduction

As mayor of Ein Qiniyya, a Druze village at the foot of Mount Hermon in the Golan Heights of Israel, I find myself running a city in a very unique era - the age of screens (Tooth et al., 2021). Our world is increasingly connected through technology, and digital platforms have transformed the way we communicate, access information and make even our most personal decisions (Fuchs, 2000). In the midst of this digital revolution, however, we can also recognize some worrisome trends emerging – First of all, people are not physically moving like they used to, leading to sedentary lifestyles and health problems and the prevalence of screen-based human interactions has led to a decline in face-to-face interpersonal communication (Tooth et al., 2021). In this regard, I believe that it is crucial for me as mayor to address these challenges and revitalize the welfare and social fabric of our municipality. Ein Qiniyya, with its

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unspoiled nature and vibrant cultural heritage, offers the perfect opportunity to promote sports tourism to revitalize the body and promote direct communication between people.

Sports tourism is an effective antidote to the sedentary habits that are prevalent in the age of screens. By encouraging our residents and visitors to be physically active, we can offset the negative effects of a technology-driven lifestyle. Physical activity not only improves physical health, but also mental well-being and overall quality of life (Fuchs, 2023; Marquez et al., 2020). In addition, sports activities provide people with a platform for face-to-face communication. In a world where virtual interactions have become the norm, it is important to create opportunities for real human contact. Sports tourism brings people together and allows them to bond over shared experiences, teamwork, and friendly competition. Sports activities facilitate interpersonal communication and allow people to interact beyond the confines of the screen, sharing ideas and building lasting relationships (Theodorakis et al., 2019).

Therefore, in this paper I try to show that promoting internal and external sports tourism in our village is not only a way to showcase our cultural heritage and natural beauty, but also a means to create a vibrant and cohesive community that values physical activity, human relationships, and the incomparable beauty of Ein Qiniyya.

1.1 Sports & Holistic Tourism

In 1982, the World Tourism Society (WTS) established two basic elements to define tourism activities. First, tourism includes transient, short-term travel to destinations that are not close to home or work. Second, it includes the activities that people engage in at a destination, whether for leisure, business, or other purposes (WTS, 1982 in Robinson, 2012, p. 45). In recent years, a new form of leisure and entertainment has emerged, sports tourism, which combines the thrill of sports with the excitement of travel (Su, 2012). Sports tourism has quickly become a significant segment within the broader tourism industry. It includes travel to attend or observe sporting events, as well as sports-related activities at various destinations (Radicchi, 2013; Schumacher, 2015). Sports tourism has proven to be a catalyst for destination improvement, employment growth, and tourism infrastructure development (Mashiach, 2021). In 2011 alone, for example, the sports tourism industry generated an incredible \$7.68 billion in revenue worldwide (Schumacher, 2015). This surge in popularity can be attributed to a variety of motivations, including the desire for physical challenge, cultural discovery, and the opportunity to meet like-minded people (Nordin, 2005; Šimková & Holzner, 2014; Dolinting, Yusof, & Soon, 2015).

Leisure, recreation, sports, and tourism play an important role in modern societies. They contribute to economic development, improving quality of life, promoting social cohesion, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting environmental sustainability (Roberts, 2006; Kelly, 2012; Butler, 1999) and psychological flexibility (Fuchs, 2023).

In recent years, tourism behavior has changed. Sports tourism and active vacation tourism are no longer limited to the younger generation. Activities such as hiking, mountain biking, car navigation, off-roading, safaris, and winter sports have gained popularity among people of all ages (Mashiach, 2021). This trend has created new opportunities for destinations to attract visitors and compete for hosting sporting events (Schumacher, 2015; Donner, 2011).

In the field of tourism, the concept of holistic tourism has gained importance. Holistic tourism involves the construction and operation of a destination, be it a city or a small town, with emphasis on the organic integration of regional resources, industrial development, social cooperation, and coordinated economic and social growth (Li, 2016). The focus is on utilizing local resources, offering comprehensive products and services, and meeting the diverse needs of tourists (Li, 2016).

1.2 The Location

The Golan Heights, covering an area of 1,250 square kilometers, offers a rich variety of attractions and activities for a wide range of interests. The region's unique geography is a playground for outdoor enthusiasts and adventure seekers. Mount Hermon, located in the northern part of the Golan, is the highest mountain in Israel. Its snow-covered slopes and well-developed ski resorts make it an enticing destination for winter sports tourism. Skiing, snowboarding and other exciting winter activities attract enthusiasts from near and far. The combination of challenging slopes and breathtaking views offers an unforgettable experience for thrill seekers and nature lovers alike.

To the west of the Golan lies the famous Sea of Galilee, a paradise for water sports enthusiasts. The huge lake attracts with its calm waters and offers an ideal environment for swimming, sailing, kayaking and fishing. The Sea of Galilee has become a well-known center for water sports activities and attracts

tourists seeking both relaxation and adventure. In the southern part of the Golan, the Route 98 trails are a paradise for cycling enthusiasts. This extensive network of roads and trails winds through the region's picturesque landscapes, offering an exciting experience for cyclists of all levels. The hilly terrain and breathtaking views along the route make Golan Heights an ideal destination for cyclists seeking both physical challenges and natural beauty.

The abundance of natural treasures located near each other has cemented the Golan's reputation. And can become a paradise for sports tourists. From winter sports on Mount Hermon to water sports on the Sea of Galilee to exciting cycling adventures along Route 98, the region offers a wide range of interests and preferences.

Ein Qiniyya is a small Druze village in the southern foothills of Mount Hermon in Israel. The village was granted local council status in 1982, signifying its administrative autonomy within the Israeli governmental system. Ein Qiniyya population in 2019 was 2,098 according to Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS, 2019). The population of Ein Qiniyya is growing steadily with an annual increase of 1.6%. Although the village is relatively small, it occupies an important place in the ranking of municipalities and is ranked 249th in Israel. Education plays an important role in the village, as evidenced by the high percentage of 12th grade students who successfully obtain the national Bagrut High School diploma. In the 2019-2020 academic year, the rate of students earning this diploma reached an impressive 95.5%, reflecting the commitment to academic excellence and the high value placed on education in the community.

In terms of economic indicators, the average monthly salary of an employee in Ein Qiniyya in 2022 is approximately 1,644 EURO. It is important to note that this figure is slightly lower than the national average income for an individual in Israel, which is approximately 2,618 EURO (ICBS, 2022). These statistics shed light on the economic landscape of the village and provide insight into the income levels and economic opportunities of the residents.

Ein Qiniyya has immense potential for the development and management of sports tourism. The topography of Ein Qiniyya is built on a steep slope. The upper houses of the village are 850 meters above sea level and the lower houses of the village are 600 meters above sea level. A difference in altitude of 150 meters, which corresponds to the horizontal distance between them about 750 square meters. By taking advantage of the natural beauty of the region, the cultural heritage of the village, and the increasing popularity of sports tourism, Ein Qiniyya can position itself as a unique and attractive destination for sports enthusiasts and travelers. By examining the challenges, opportunities, and strategies for success, we can unlock the full potential of sports tourism for the village, its residents, and the region.

1.3. Reasons for Promoting Internal and External Sports Tourism

Promoting internal and external sports tourism in Ein Qiniyya can be considered the best way to fulfill the role of a mayor in the age of screens for several reasons:

Promoting sports tourism can provide opportunities for residents to connect with each other, socialize, and strengthen the community (Struthers, 2011; Gibson, Kaplanidou, & Kang, 2012). It has the potential to bring Ein Qiniyya local community together, encourage participation, and foster a sense of belonging.

The city can promote its identity and create a positive image that resonates with both residents and potential visitors by using sports tourism showcases offerings, share success stories, generate interest, leveraging natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and sports facilities (Hargrove, 2017). Sports tourism can serve Ein Qiniyya as a platform to highlight Ein unique features and attractions.

In the age of screens, physical inactivity and screen addiction have become major problems (Kardefelt-Winther, 2017). By promoting sports tourism, the city can promote physical activity, health, and wellness among residents and visitors. By using digital platforms, Ein Qiniyya can disseminate information about sports activities, provide training resources, and facilitate virtual engagement in sports-related initiatives, motivating people to lead more active and balanced lifestyles.

1.4. Obstacles Promoting Internal and External Sports Tourism

The development of internal and external sports tourism in Ein Qiniyya has great potential, but there are some obstacles that we must address.

It is critical to the success of sports tourism initiatives that the city has the necessary resources to meet the facilities needs of participants and visitors (Gibson, 1998; Weed & Bull, 2012; Higham & Hinch, 2018). One of the main obstacles that Ein Qiniyya is facing is the need for adequate infrastructure and

facilities to support sports tourism. This includes the construction or renovation of sports facilities, accommodations, internet and transportation systems.

Securing sufficient funding and investment for sports tourism development can be a significant barrier. The costs associated with infrastructure development, marketing campaigns, event organization, and ongoing maintenance can be significant (Heydari et al., 2022). There is a need to develop various sources of funding, such as government grants, private sponsorship, and partnerships, to ensure the financial sustainability of sports tourism efforts.

Engaging and mobilizing diverse stakeholders, including residents, community organizations, sports associations, and government agencies, is essential to the success of sports tourism initiatives. Effective communication, collaboration, and negotiation are necessary to build consensus, address concerns, and ensure that all stakeholders are aligned in their vision and commitment to Ein Qiniyya sports tourism (Gjertsen, 2022).

Effective marketing and promotion strategies are needed to promote sports tourism destinations. The challenge of establishing a recognized and desirable location for sporting events and activities can include targeted advertising campaigns, participation in industry trade shows and exhibitions, use of digital marketing channels, and building partnerships with tourism agencies and sports organizations (Yamashita & Takata, 2020). The seasonality of sports tourism and the potential impact of weather conditions can be challenging. The location of Ein Qiniyya near Mount Hermon means that certain sports and activities may be limited to certain seasons or weather conditions. Developing a diverse range of sports that can be enjoyed throughout the year and contingency plans for bad weather will be critical to attracting visitors and ensuring economic stability (Mesci et al., 2021).

2. Methodology

The combined methodology of a comprehensive literature review and assumptions development provides a robust foundation for the research, enabling a deeper understanding of the challenges of the Age of Screens and the potential of sports tourism as a comprehensive urban development strategy in Ein Qiniyya.

2.1. Methodology: Literature Review

The research methodology is founded on a rigorous literature review approach. This methodology aims to establish a robust theoretical framework and gather essential insights into several key domains, including sedentary lifestyles, screen-based interactions, well-being influenced by nature exposure, cultural heritage in tourism, and sustainable tourism practices. The comprehensive literature review involves the following steps:

The literature review begins with formulating a structured search strategy. This strategy defines the scope of the research and specifies the key terms and phrases related to the study's focus areas. Boolean operators, such as AND, OR, and NOT, are employed to refine search queries and maximize the relevance of sources.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria are established to ensure the relevance and quality of sources. Only peer-reviewed articles, academic papers, books, and reports published in reputable journals and publications are considered. Primary sources with empirical data and secondary sources with theoretical contributions are included.

Each source is critically evaluated for its relevance, credibility, and quality. Relevant information is extracted from the sources, including key concepts, methodologies, findings, and recommendations. A structured framework categorizes the information according to the study's focus areas.

The information extracted from the selected sources is synthesized to develop a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Common themes, trends, and key findings are identified through qualitative analysis. Connections between sedentary lifestyles, screen-based interactions, well-being, cultural heritage, and sustainable tourism are explored.

2.2. Methodology: Assumptions Development

Based on the insights and findings gathered during the literature review, a set of assumptions is systematically formulated. These assumptions serve as guiding principles for the research and contribute

to developing the study's objectives and strategies. The process of assumption development involves the following steps:

Identification of Key Insights: The key insights and findings extracted from the literature review are carefully reviewed and analyzed. Concepts related to sedentary lifestyles, screen-based interactions, nature's influence on well-being, cultural heritage in tourism, and sustainable tourism practices are considered.

Formulation of Assumptions: Assumptions are developed based on the identified insights. These assumptions encompass the potential of sports tourism to address sedentary lifestyles, enhance social bonds, promote cultural heritage, and contribute to well-being. They are formulated in clear, concise statements aligning with the research objectives.

Validation: The formulated assumptions are critically evaluated to ensure they accurately represent the insights gained from the literature review. They are validated through logical reasoning and supported by evidence from the reviewed sources.

Integration into Research Framework: The validated assumptions serve as foundational elements for the research framework. They guide the development of research objectives, strategies, and the overall research design.

3. Results

The comprehensive literature review conducted for this study has yielded valuable insights into the multifaceted dynamics of sedentary lifestyles, screen-based interactions, well-being influenced by nature exposure, cultural heritage in tourism, and sustainable tourism practices. The reviewed literature has emerged as a transformative approach for this municipality underscored the detrimental effects of sedentary behaviors and excessive screen time on physical health and social interactions, echoing concerns raised in contemporary research (Tooth et al., 2021). Conversely, the positive impact of nature exposure on overall well-being has been consistently documented, emphasizing the therapeutic value of natural environments (Marquez et al., 2020). Moreover, the significance of integrating cultural heritage with tourism experiences has emerged as a pivotal driver of destination attractiveness and visitor engagement (Hargrove, 2017). Sustainable tourism practices are vital for long-term destination development, fostering economic growth, and preserving cultural and natural assets (Carneiro et al., 2016).

These findings collectively lay the groundwork for understanding the unique challenges of the Age of Screens and the potential of sports tourism as a holistic urban development strategy in Ein Qiniyya. The literature review highlights the critical need to counter sedentary lifestyles and the erosion of face-to-face interactions and underscores the role of sports tourism in achieving these objectives. In the following sections, these insights will be translated into concrete strategies and recommendations to leverage Ein Qiniyya's natural beauty and cultural heritage as catalysts for revitalization, community cohesion, and enhanced well-being in an age marked by digital screens.

4. Discussion

The findings derived from the comprehensive literature review underscore the urgency of addressing the challenges posed by the Age of Screens in contemporary society. Sedentary lifestyles and screen-based interactions have become prevalent, leading to adverse effects on physical health and a decline in face-to-face interpersonal communication (Tooth et al., 2021). In this context, the role of Ein Qiniyya as a Druze village nestled amid the unspoiled nature of the Golan Heights takes on new significance. The village's unique combination of natural beauty and vibrant cultural heritage provides a promising foundation for promoting sports tourism as a multifaceted solution.

One central discussion that emerges from the literature is the potential of sports tourism to counteract sedentary habits and encourage physical activity. Physical activity, as highlighted in previous research, is crucial for improving physical health and plays a pivotal role in enhancing mental well-being and overall quality of life (Marquez et al., 2020). Sports tourism can be a powerful tool to inspire residents and visitors to engage in active lifestyles, offsetting the negative consequences of excessive screen time.

Furthermore, the literature emphasizes that sports activities inherently facilitate face-to-face communication and the building meaningful relationships. In a digital age where virtual interactions have become the norm, the value of creating opportunities for genuine human contact cannot be overstated. Sports tourism has the potential to bring people together, fostering community engagement, shared experiences, teamwork, and friendly competition (Theodorakis et al., 2019). It transcends the

confines of screens, allowing individuals to interact authentically, exchange ideas, and build lasting connections.

Conclusion

The discussion on sports tourism in Ein Qiniyya extends beyond its immense potential for economic growth and recognition. It becomes a strategic pathway for promoting physical activity, strengthening community bonds, showcasing cultural identity, driving economic development, and prioritizing the health and well-being of residents and visitors alike. This holistic approach to urban development aligns Ein Qiniyya with the changing needs of a digitally connected society, ensuring that it thrives as a vibrant, active, and culturally rich destination in the age of screens.

Embracing sports education and tourism is a strategic move for the Mayor of Ein Qiniyya and a transformative one. By promoting physical activity, fostering community engagement, showcasing the city's identity, driving economic development, and prioritizing health and well-being, the Mayor can lead Ein Qiniyya toward a brighter and more prosperous future. With careful attention to addressing the obstacles and leveraging the immense potential of sports education and sports tourism, the Mayor can create a dynamic and thriving city that values active lifestyles, strong community bonds, and the unique charm of Ein Qiniyya.

However, several obstacles need to be addressed to exploit this potential fully. Adequate infrastructure and facilities must be developed or improved, including sports facilities, accommodations, internet connectivity, and transportation systems. Securing sufficient funding and investment through various sources will be crucial for the financial sustainability of sports tourism initiatives. Engaging and mobilizing diverse stakeholders is essential for building consensus and ensuring a shared commitment to Ein Qiniyya sports tourism. Effective marketing and promotion strategies are needed to establish Ein Qiniyya as a recognized sports tourism destination. Addressing the challenges of seasonality and weather conditions through developing a diverse range of sports and contingency plans will attract visitors and ensure economic stability.

By overcoming these obstacles, Ein Qiniyya can position itself as a thriving sports tourism destination, reaping the benefits of increased tourism, economic growth, and enhanced reputation. Incorporating these principles will enable leading the village towards a prosperous future. By harnessing the power of sports and tourism, the city can flourish by promoting physical activity, community engagement, economic development, and well-being, all while maintaining its cultural authenticity. Together, Ein Qiniyya can stand as a shining example of a city thriving in the age of screens.

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